The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE UPRIGHT SOUL.

Late to our town there came a maid,
A noble woman, true and pure,
Who in the while she stayed
Wrought works that will endure.

It was not anything she said;
It was not anything she did:
It was the movement of her head,
The lifting of her lid.

Her little motions when she spoke,
The presence of an upright soul,
The living light that from her broke,—
It was the perfect whole.

We saw it in her floating hair,
We saw it in her laughing eye,
For every look and feature there
Wrought works that cannot die.

For she to many among us gave
A reverence for the true, the pure,
The perfect, that has power to save,
And make the doubting sure.

She passed; she went to other lands;
She knew not of the work she did:
The wondrous product of her hands
From her is ever hid.

Forever, did I say? Oh, no!
The time must come when she will look
Upon her pilgrimage below,
And find it in God's Book.

That as she trod her path aright,
Power from her very garments stole;
For such is the mysterious might
God grants the upright soul.

— *Western Messenger.*

THE CHRISTIAN RACE.

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." — HEB. xii. 1, 2.

The illustration in the text is drawn from the games in the amphitheatre. The Christians were the runners, and the prize eternal life with God. Seated on the encircling banks were spectators, not uninterested or careless, but those who had themselves run the same race, and now had won the prize. No sympathy, therefore, could be greater than that they had for those who ran below. By these every success of the racers was hailed with joy, every failure mourned and pitied.

We are not alone as we run to God, not uncared for. There is a cloud of witnesses whose unseen multitudes encircle us with the victorious faith and patience of a thousand thousand years. All the crowned saints of the Past watch with passionate love all the contending spirits of the Present.

And this was the encouragement which the writer gave to the new runners of the Christian course. They had lately enrolled themselves, they had not as yet suffered much. "Ye have not as yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." But the hour of persecution was at hand, and it behooved them to be worthy of the noble witnesses of old.

They were not marching unto death, but

unto life; not to loneliness, but to the society of the just made perfect; not to anarchy, but to a city with foundations, whose builder and maker was God. This would be a glorious Future, but the Past was no less glorious. For there was the cloud of witnesses, brothers all, who had suffered for the faith, wrought righteousness, renounced the world, lived for the invisible, and won its rapture. Therefore, encouraged by the Past, ennobled in the Future, enwrapt in the Present by the mighty cloud of martyrs, let them run with patience the race that was set before them, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith.

And they needed the exhortation; for, if they had not much persecution now, it was different a little while afterward. Then another amphitheatre encompassed them, and another cloud of witnesses, full of cruel eyes, and cruel voices shouted for their death. The sand on which they ran was stained with blood and black with fire; and, when they died, the Roman world cried, Fool!

It was something great not to be faint-hearted then. It needed then something more than our untortured faith to run the Christian race. But the bitter time brought forth its own support. God was very near, as He is near to us when bitterest is the pain we bear for Him. Their brother Christ held their hand when the lion leaped upon them, as he holds ours when for the sake of his truth we stand against the world. Nor had they need then to look back far into the past to find in the great endurance of the martyrs, long since dead, encouragement. There were witnesses closer and dearer than Abraham and Moses and Isaiah, more within the range of human imagination. There was scarcely a Christian family who could not think of one of their own blood as dead for the faith. There were hundreds known to every Christian congregation, names that were household words, who had passed triumphant through their trial, and were now at rest.

And now with regard to us: we do not suffer persecution as they did. Their bones have paved the path on which we walk so easily. But we have other sufferings. To live with some pain seems the destiny of man; and there is a persecution which the spirit of every age inflicts on those who follow truth within it, and of which many bear the brunt. And, of these, many are not called Christians. As to the spirit of the world, it is in all ages the same; and it never is unpersecuting. It never spares those who go against it, who will not follow its maxims, subscribe to its laws, or enroll in its regiment, who will not cry with it, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

Who does not know how we are tempted? —tempted by sins that arise out of our civilization, by our imagination, curiosity, passions, by over-plenty, by money and power and display, by vanity and change. We are persecuted by our desires, allured to offer incense on the altars of devils, to turn aside from the race to rest, to join the dance or the drift of pleasure or of getting on, and to say good-by to God. There are things within us far worse than the Christians of old had to fear in the amphitheatre, more to be dreaded than the sword or the flame or the wild beasts of the desert.

Oh, recall in this whirl of life whose noise deafens the ears of the spirit, recall the vision of the text. Out of sight, but in most real existence, a cloud of witnesses encompasses you. Solemn, beautiful faces, —solemn with the calm of eternal righteousness, alit with the ardent movement of eternal love, beautiful with the light of holiness triumphant, impassioned with desire for your victory,—these are watching you in your race. Let the thought awaken your heart and sanctify your life, bring you some strength to endure in trial, some courage to do your duty.

It is impossible to say that the dead have no influence on our lives. They touch us from the past. Their "living soul is flashed on ours." We walk through life like men who make their way through an Alpine valley, dark below, but from the upper edge of whose precipices sweeps back an upland country bathed in light. Thence come to us, walking far beneath, the whispers of the upper hills, sweet waters that fall down and carry with them flowers unknown below; and, through the serried pines, sometimes the flashing of a light unspeakable. For so to us arrive at hours when the soul is intent the mystic hints, the rare voices, the inspiration, whence we know not, of that vast world of souls beyond, of the great and the good made perfect.

But in no mysterious, magical way vouchsafed only to a few initiated. The way is the common way, whereby thought touches thought on earth; and the initiation is a heart calm and pure, an imagination eager and clear, "a conscience like a sea at rest." There are no visible signs of this communion,—they would but desecrate it,—no manifestations to the sense, for these things are the property of the spirit; but in ineffable nearness of sympathy and cheer and comfort, in the vitalizing and soothing strength that the more perfect characters give to the less perfect, we win a power we know not in temptation,—a quiet which keeps us apart from the crowd that whirls its noisy dance around its stupid gods; an encouragement to live on when useful life seems ended; courage, animation, out of which springs patience in the race,—till at last this invisible world becomes so present, so real, constant, and living, that we see as it were the writer's vision,—row on row around us, climbing a mighty amphitheatre, the noble army of martyrs, the goodly fellowship of all the saints praising God, and among them One, the Leader and Perfecter of Faith, like to a Son of Man, who, watching us, cries out with joy and love, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—*Stopford A. Brooke.*

THE STILL HOUR.

FROM "THE TURNED LESSON."

Is it not often so,
That we only learn in part,
And the Master's testing-time may show
That it was not quite "by heart?"
Then he gives, in his wise and patient grace,
That lesson again,
With the mark still set in the self-same place.

Only stay by his side
Till the page is really known.
It may be we failed because we tried
To learn it all alone;
And, now that he would not let us lose
One lesson of love
(For he knows the loss), can we refuse?

Frances Ridley Havergal.

And, lastly, there is the cross of *Sacrifice.* People often talk about the happiness of doing good and of love to others. But love to others, if it is ever to be more than easy good-nature, has to begin as a duty, in self-sacrifice. As for doing good, real doing good is one of the hardest things in the world, requiring long, untiring sacrifice of self. Do not be deceived by that easy good-nature which cannot refuse a child anything if it only cries hard enough, and which likes to give to a beggar, even though persuaded that he is a fraud. The loving-kindness that Christ taught men is a very different thing. It is a stronger and harder thing. It has to begin in self-denial, in putting others before self, in being kind not only to friends, but to people you do not like and do not want to be kind to, in repaying rudeness with courtesy, evil with good. So in the beginning it has to be a cross; but it need not be so for long. Begin by denying yourself, and by and by you forget yourself. Self-denial becomes glorified into self-forgetfulness. The cross of sacrifice is changed into the crown of love. Not yet the perfect crown. Not yet anything to make us self-satisfied,—only to cheer us on. The upward way cannot be easy: it must be climbing to the end; but, as you climb, there comes more love of man, more love of God, a blessing of stronger, abler, kinder, happier life,—and ever growing over all a quiet, restful sense of something brighter, happier still, beyond, —some crown of better life than aught we know of here, which the Lord hath, in the unfolding of the eternal years, for them that love him.—*Brooke Herford.*

Many mean things are done in the family, for which moods are put forward as the excuse, when the moods themselves are the most inexcusable things of all. A man or woman in tolerable health has no moral right to indulge in an unpleasant mood.—*J. G. Holland.*

We may, if we choose, make the worst of one another. Every one has his weak points; every one has his faults. We may make the worst of these: we may fix our attention constantly on these. But we may also make the best of one another. By loving what is lovable in those around us, love will flow back from them to us, and life will become a pleasure instead of a pain, and earth will become a heaven; and we shall become not unworthy followers of him whose name is Love.—*A. P. Stanley.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all matter for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.*]

BEFORE WRITING TO ASK FOR BOOKS, DO NOT FAIL TO READ THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS.

1. If you see a book offered in the Book Club which you desire to read, write directly to the address of the person who offers it. If she receives more than one request, the addresses of those to whom she cannot respond may be sent to the Book Club, and the request printed there.

2. If you have a book or paper to give or lend, write directly to the Book Club as above, and offer it with your address.

3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received 'Black Beauty,'" or whatever the book may be; not, "I have received *that book*." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise, she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

N.B.— Do not send books to the Book Club. Send only the *offer* to the club. To send the *book* involves packing it *twice* and paying postage *twice*, where once would suffice.

Those who offer books frequently receive notes, saying, "Shall I return you this book, or keep it, or pass it on?" *Unless otherwise stated, all* books offered in this department are *given*, and the postage paid.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it: else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

OFFERS.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 373 *Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.?*

Books offered by the Springfield Branch. Address Miss Clara D. Hoar, care of Samuel Bowles, Crescent Hill, Springfield Mass.

"A Country Doctor," Sarah Orne Jewett; "Voyage of the Liberdade" (book for boys); "Cape Cod Folks"; "A Nameless Nobleman"; "Progressive Housekeeping"; Spalding's "English Literature"; "Mrs. Geoffry"; "Woman's Worth and Worthlessness," Gail Hamilton; "The Breadwinners"; "The Old Mam'selle's Secret"; "The Silent Partner," E. Stuart Phelps; "Dombey and Son."

The Eastport Branch offer the following books. Address Mrs. L. H. Newcomb, Key Street, Eastport, Maine. Please send reference with first request.

School Books.

Hillard's "Sixth Reader"; Eaton's "Grammar School Arithmetic"; "Latin Lessons," Leighton; "New Latin Lessons," Allen; Swinton's "Language Lessons"; "Latin Grammar"; "Progressive German Reader"; "First Lessons in Greek"; Greenleaf's "Complete Arithmetic"; "Kings of Rome," Record; *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1899 (complete); *Cosmopolitan*, 1891 (complete); *Illustrated American*, 1898 (incomplete); odd numbers of *Youth's Companion, McClure, Munsey, Ladies' Home Journal, Harper's Weekly, Collier's Weekly, Scientific American, Army and Navy, Argosy, Century, Strand, Popular Science Monthly, Puritan, Review of Reviews, Self-culture, Babyhood, Current Literature, Quaker, Black Cat.*

Books for Children.

"Sunshine"; "Ella"; "Jenny and the Insects"; "The Tatler, or History of Patty Steele"; "Nelly and her Friends"; "Marcus"; "The Florence Stories"; "Malcom's Cottage"; "Allan Breck"; "The Orkney Islands"; "Zelma"; "Real Boys and Girls"; "Stories for Young Children"; "The Pigeon Pie"; "Nellie's First School-days"; Easy Book"; "Jonas Stories"; "*Wide Awake.*"

REQUESTS.

[*Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.*]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

I would be very glad to get reading matter of any kind,—books, papers, or magazines. I live in the country, remote from a public library. I am fond of reading, and will willingly lend to others anything you may be kind enough to send me. I am not very healthy, and like so well to read. Our minister is Rev. W. A. Elgin, Charity, Patrick County, Virginia. Mrs. W. C. Hooker, Elamsville, Patrick County, Virginia.

A friend of mine in Tom Bean, Texas, sends me *The Cheerful Letter*. I have never asked for books ; for I see we are requested to send a reference from a minister, and that's an impossibility here. The Spanish language is spoken altogether in this place; and, as I don't speak Spanish, it's very lonely for me. I have no children. My husband is railroad agent. There are only two other American families here. Occasionally we get magazines, but have no way of obtaining any of the late novels, as we cannot even get a money order in this Mexican town. Would like so much to get "Janice Meredith," "Richard Carvel," and "David Harum," or any other new books. Hoping it's not too great a favor to ask for books, under the circumstances, I remain, (Mrs.) Cora Fenelon, Javal, Coah, Mexico. Former address, Matamoros, Laguna, Coah, Mexico.

I received *The Cheerful Letter*, and would be glad to receive some other reading matter, as we live in a very lonesome place, and I am alone so much. Anything that the friends of *Cheerful Letter* have to spare I would be thankful for. Thanks very much for *The Cheerful Letter*. Lizzie Town, Toronto, Woodson County, Kansas.

Miss M. B. Landis, Oxford, North Carolina, asks for the following books: "Life and Letters of Louise Alcott," "Lucy Larcom," "Whittier," "Hawthorne," "Hawthorne and his Wife," "A Kentucky Cardinal," "Concordance," *Home Journal*, or any magazine excepting *Munsey*.

Mrs. Sarah Thorp, Chelsea, Indian Territory, who is almost helpless, desires reading to pass away the lonely hours.

Mrs. Cora Lett, Centralia, Indian Territory, lives a long distance from neighbors and far from a free school. She asks for reading for herself and children.

We are here, stranded on an old Indian reservation sixty-three miles west of the Missouri River. My two sons are taking care of a flock of six hundred sheep. They get "half the increase and half the wool." The wool money buys our plain food, pays the herder, and gets us plain clothing. My sons generally keep a herder,— not to make their work less, but that they may be able to do more. Last summer my sons herded the sheep, and mowed and stacked one hundred and fifty loads of hay. They changed every day with each other and also the teams. They will sell surplus hay, which will help to pay debts or do what the wool lacks. There have been horses, harnesses, wagons, and mowers to buy, besides improvements to make, which, although only rude log cabins, are comfortable. By and by we may be able to build better houses, as many of our neighbors have done. Neighbors cover a circle. Our nearest is one and one-half miles away. The profits of sheep are good, but sometimes storms and severe winters cut them down. We lost so many in the winter of 1898 and 1899 that we are just beginning to get ahead. This year we saved four hundred and fifty lambs. It is not all profit, as we have to provide plenty of hay for winter and some corn, as well as lumber, duck wire, and tarred paper for sheds, and pumps for wells. To make all has kept my sons working far into the night. You see that sheep-herding is not the idyllic, half-lazy work of sitting on a hillside while they crop the grass, as is popularly supposed. I herded last fall, while one son hauled hay and the other harvested sugar beets. Some days I hemmed an apron string or read a novel. One day I wrote some verses for the *Farm and Home*, and thereby earned a few dollars. I send away nearly all the reading I get. I send to people whom I know cannot buy it. Then there are people here to supply, so that the reading sent to Manilla, South Dakota, does double duty, and sometimes more. Manilla is a sort of sub-station of *The Cheerful Letter*. We are extremely grateful to *The Cheerful Letter*. I use my pen, and so clothe myself, when my strength allows. My sons have denied themselves everything beyond work clothes, and we do not seem able to buy reading as yet. I should like to read "He fell in Love with his Wife," "Aftermath,"

or any of Miss Wilkins's or Howells's works. Mrs. M. S. Sibley, Manilla, South Dakota.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

[*Contributions to this department may be sent to Mrs. J. S. Howe, 26 Chestnut Street, Brookline, Mass.*]

SELECTIONS FROM "THE RELIGIOUS CULTURE OF CHILDREN."

BY REV. M. J. SAVAGE.

What ought to be the atmosphere of the home that the children are to breathe, in the midst of which they are to grow?

The first and most important things in religion are the things that should constitute it. You may not call them religion, you may not talk about God at all; but the essence, the soul, of the whole thing is here. The child should grow up in an atmosphere of reverence, of worship, of gratitude. What do I mean? I mean that the child from the earliest dawn of its intelligence should be taught to reverence all that is above it, to reverence all that is beneath it; for with our modern thought of God, of where he is, of how he manifests himself, he is in the mystery that is under our feet, as well as in the majesty that is over our heads. He is in the humblest life about us, the people who occupy a lower station than we do, the lower forms of life with which the child comes in contact. There is a touch of this infinite mystery about all these things; and right here is the field for the development in the child of this sense of reverence for whatever has about it the touch of the infinite,— a reverence for its own body and its functions, a reverence for health, for cleanliness, for whatever touches the well-being of the body, a reverence for its mates, a regard for the rights of playfellows and friends. The very beginning of religion is right here in these little things that constitute the daily acts of the child's work or study or play. Reverence is the root, the mainspring of all that is best in us. Worship is substantially the same thing. It is to admire, to look up to that which is above us, that which is finer, more beautiful, better, lovelier, in any way. Learn to acknowledge these, and bend the soul before them. This is not humiliation. This is not teaching the child to stoop. It is by this kind of stooping that we rise. As I have had occasion to tell you more than once, man is the only being who can worship; and this worship, this honor and admiration which we feel for something that is above us, it is this which makes it possible for us to be progressive beings, which makes it possible for us to climb and ascend. Teach the child the sense of gratitude, the courtesies of life. We are none of us half grateful enough. We do not teach our children to be half grateful enough. As I watch children growing up, seeing them at their work and play and studies, the impression they make upon me many times is the feeling that everything in the world belongs to them of right; and, if they do not get everything they desire, they are being wronged. Teach the children, and learn the lesson yourselves, that we deserve nothing, and that, when something is bestowed upon us, it should call out the response of grateful recognition. This is religious even when it means simply a thank you to a playmate; because, as the child develops and grows, he will learn that the father or the playmate or the friend is only a mediator, is only a second-hand of the Being through whom all things have come. For, when you trace it to the end, "every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights." When you admire anything, then you are taking the first step on the stairway that leads you up to God. When you say, Thank you, for anything you have received, you are taking the first step that leads you to say, "I thank Thee, my Father." For every step up into the higher things of life is just a step Godward. These little courtesies mean much in the culture and development of that attitude of mind which leads up into the expression of the religious life.

I note very often on the street-cars a little boy, who, if he were at home, would be running wild and never content to sit still a moment, occupying a full seat by the side of his mother while some old lady or old gentleman is standing, with difficulty hanging on to a strap. The mother does not understand what courtesy means enough to see that not only here is a breach of the very first principles of good manners, but of those things that lie at the root of the truly

religious life, the right relation to the fellow-man being the first step to the right relation to God. All these things, then, that constitute the atmosphere of the home, are the first and most important steps in the religious culture of the child.

The next thing is the culture of the conscience. I do not mean, of course, that you are to get through with one of these methods of culture before you take up the other. I am obliged to treat them separately here for the sake of clearness of thought; but they go along together just so far and so fast as the child is capable of receiving the culture that you are trying to give.

What, then, in regard to the culture of the conscience? The first most important thing in all the world is that the child be impressed from the earliest moment when it is capable of receiving that impression that the one dominant, important thing in all this universe is *right;* that nothing else is of any importance as compared with it; that name or fame or position or wealth or power —none of these things—is worth a pin's weight as compared with right. Let the child learn that lesson which Wordsworth teaches in his great ode to "Duty," that it is by a recognition of the law of right that the stars hold their places and the vast heavens are glorious and strong. It is right obedience to the laws of God which constitutes the order of all the heavenly bodies that swing in the blue over our heads. It is right that keeps the earth solid and firm beneath our feet. It is because the universe is obedient ever to the laws of God that it stands and is firm and strong. And, when it comes to human nature and human relationships and human life, whatever there is of happiness in this world, whatever there is of goodness, of beauty, of truth,—these are only another name for what is right, for what is obedience to the external laws of the Almighty. And whatever of pain there is, whatever of disease, whatever of suffering, whatever of crime, whatever wets human cheeks with tears, whatever wrings the heart with its aches, whatever is evil, whatever the good of all the world have been striving against and trying to put under feet in all ages, is simply that which is not right. Let the child, then, see the right, and learn that it is the thing which you regard as of greatest importance in the world.

Then what about conscience as related to right? I need to guard this a little. Teach your children that they must obey the voice of their conscience always, that they must do what they think is right always. Yet there is a paradox here, an apparent contradiction, which is not a real one. Guard your children against the stupendous mistake of supposing their consciences are infallible. You must obey your consciences; but at the same time you must never for a moment suppose that your consciences do not need to be educated and taught and trained. You have only to look over the history of the world to find out that consciences are not infallible. Torquemada followed his conscience in persecuting and burning heretics. I have no sort of question that John Calvin was as conscientious as any man who ever lived when he burned Servetus. Some of the greatest tragedies of the world have sprung out of the clash of consciences. So long as you think a certain thing is right, you violate your own moral nature, if you disregard it. You break down the safeguards of your own character. Keep your mind open always, and learn to study and find out whether your conscience is telling you accurately or not. *Conscience does not tell you what is right: conscience simply tells you to do what you think is right.* You find out what right is as the result of study and careful observation of human experience. You find out what in the long run results in good, in the welfare and happiness of the world. You find out what is right and wrong by experience, just as you find out what is good to eat and what is poison by experience.

Meantime do not let your children grow up with the thought that their consciences are judgment seats before which they have a right to drag their playmates to judgment. Teach your children charity. I may believe that I am right; but I have no business to be uncharitable toward every person who disagrees with me. I may fight what I believe to be wrong; but I must fight for the sake of the people who differ from me as well as for those who agree with me. Never fight people. Fight principles, fight the things that hurt and injure people. So teach your child to listen to the voice of conscience, and to regard right as the supreme and most important thing in all

the world; but at the same time teach your child charity toward other children, that there are different religious systems and ways, and to think charitably about them. Then, as they grow older, they will be able to find out and understand what is really right. They will learn facts in the light of human experience. They will acquire convictions as to what is right, and how they can best help the world.

(*Conclusion.*)

BIOGRAPHY.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

BY GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.*

One calm afternoon in the summer of 1837 a young man passed down the elm-shaded walk that separated the old Craigie House in Cambridge from the high road. Reaching the door, he paused to observe the huge, old-fashioned brass knocker and the quaint handle,— relics, evidently, of an epoch of colonial state. To his mind, however, the house and these signs of its age were not interesting from the romance of antiquity alone, but from their association with the early days of our Revolution, when Gen. Washington, after the battle of Bunker Hill, had his headquarters in the mansion. Had his hand, perhaps, lifted this same latch, lingering as he clasped it in the whirl of a myriad emotions? Had he, too, paused in the calm summer afternoon, and watched the silver gleam of the broad river to the meadows,— the dreamy blue of the Milton hills beyond? And had the tranquillity of that landscape penetrated his heart with "the sleep that is among the hills," and whose fairest dream to him was a hope now realized in the peaceful prosperity of his country?

At least the young man knew that, if the details of the mansion had been somewhat altered, so that he could not be perfectly sure of touching what Washington touched, yet he saw what Washington saw,— the same placid meadow-lands, the same undulating horizon, the same calm stream. And it is thus that an old house of distinct association asserts its claim and secures its influence. It is a nucleus of interest,— a heart of romance, from which pulse a thousand reveries enchanting the summer hours.

So the young man passed not unaccompanied down the elm-shaded path, and the air and the scene were affluent of radiant phantoms.

But, when the brazen clang of the huge knocker had ceased resounding, the great door slowly opened, and no phantom serving-man, but a veritable flesh-and-blood retainer of the hostess of the mansion, invited the visitor to enter. He inquired for Mrs. Craigie. In answer the door of a little parlor was thrown open; and the young man beheld a tall, erect figure, majestically crowned with a turban, beneath which burned a pair of keen gray eyes. There was kindliness mellowing the severity of her reply to her visitor's inquiry if there was a room vacant in the house.

"I lodge students no longer," she responded gravely, possibly not without regret — as she contemplated the applicant — that she had vowed so stern a resolution. "But I am not a student," answered the stranger. "I am a professor in the university." "A professor?" said she inquiringly, as if her mind failed to conceive a professor without a clerical sobriety of apparel, a white cravat, or at least spectacles.

"Prof. Longfellow," continued the guest, introducing himself.

"Ah! that is different," said the old lady, her features slightly relaxing, as if professors were, *ex officio*, innocuous, and she need no longer barricade herself behind a stern gravity of demeanor, "I will show you what there is."

Thereupon she preceded the professor up the stairs, and, gaining the upper hall, paused at each door, opened it, permitted him to perceive its delightful fitness for his purpose,— kindled expectation to the utmost,— then quietly closed the door again, observing, "You cannot have that."

The turbaned hostess at length opened the door of the south-east corner room in the second story, and while the guest looked wistfully in and awaited the customary "You cannot have that," he was agreeably surprised by a variation of the strain to the effect that he might occupy it.

The room was upon the front of the house, and looked over the meadows to the river. It had an atmosphere of fascinating

* Written in 1853.

repose, in which the young man was at once domesticated as in an old home. The elms of the avenue shaded his windows; and, as he glanced from them, the summer lay asleep upon the landscape in the windless day.

"This," said the old lady, with a slight sadness in her voice, as if speaking of times forever past and to which she herself properly belonged,—"this was Gen. Washington's chamber."

The stately hostess retired, and the next day the new lodger took possession of his room. He lived entirely apart from the old lady, although under the same roof. The silence of the ancient mansion, which to its new resident was truly "the still air of delightful studies," was not disturbed by the shrill cackle of a country household. In the morning, after he had settled himself to the day's occupation, the scholar heard the faint and measured tread of the old lady as she descended to breakfast, her silken gown rustling along the hall.

The lines of the poet had fallen in pleasant places. With the old house and its hostess and its many known and unknown associations, there was no lack of material for thought and speculation.

Col. John Vassal is supposed to have built the house toward the close of the first half of the last century. His son John fell upon Revolutionary times, and was a Royalist. The house passed from his hands, and was purchased by the provincial government. After the battle of Bunker Hill, it was allotted to George Washington as his headquarters. The south-eastern room upon the lower floor, at the right of the front door, and now occupied as a study by Mr. Longfellow, was devoted to the same purpose by Washington. The room over it, as Madame Craigie has already informed us, was his chamber. The room upon the lower floor, in the rear of the study, which was afterward enlarged and is the poet's library, was occupied by the aides-de-camp of the commander-in-chief. And the south-west room upon the lower floor was Mrs. Washington's drawing-room. Many of Washington's published letters are dated from this house.

The Craigie House is now the poet's, and has again acquired a distinctive interest in history. It was in Portland, Maine, in the year 1807, and in an old square wooden house upon the edge of the sea, that Longfellow was born. He graduated at Brunswick with Hawthorne, whom then the poet knew only as a shy youth in a bright-buttoned coat, flitting across the college grounds. In 1826 Longfellow first visited Europe. He loitered through France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Holland, and England, and returned to America in 1829.

Appointed professor in his Alma Mater, he devoted himself to the scholar's life, poring long and earnestly over the literature of lands which he knew so well and truly that their literature lived for him, and was not a hard hieroglyph only.

In the midst of the quiet professorial days, still a very young man, the poet was married,—a fleeting joy, ending by the death of his wife in Rotterdam in 1835. As yet the poet was guiltless of a volume; but his name was known, and upon the credit of a few fugitive pieces he was mentioned first after the monopolizing masters of American verse.

In the year 1835 he received the appointment of professor in Harvard College at Cambridge, which he accepted, but sailed for Europe again in the course of the year. Upon leaving, he committed the publication of *Outre Mer* to the Harpers in New York, who issued the entire work in two volumes.

In the autumn of 1836 he returned, and in December removed to Cambridge. At length, as we have seen, one calm afternoon in the summer of 1837 Longfellow first took lodging in the Craigie House. In his still south-eastern chamber the poet wrote "Hyperion" in the years 1838–39. Here, too, was written the "Voices of the Night." In 1842 the ballads and other poems were published, and in the same year the poet sailed again for Europe. In 1843 Longfellow bought the Craigie House.

In 1846 the "Belfry of Bruges" collection was published, in 1847 the "Evangeline," in 1850 "Seaside and Fireside," and in 1851 "The Golden Legend." The library of the poet is the long north-eastern room upon the lower floor. A little table by the northern window looking upon the garden is the usual seat of the poet. Emerging into the hall, the eyes of the enamoured visitor fall upon the massive old staircase with the clock upon the landing. Directly he hears a singing in his mind:—

"Somewhat back from the village street
Stands the old-fashioned country-seat.
Across its antique portico
Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw,
And from its station in the hall
An ancient timepiece says to all,
Forever — never!
Never — forever!"

But he does not see the particular clock of the poem, which stood upon another staircase in another quaint old mansion. Through the meadows in front flows the placid Charles.

"River that in silence windest
Through the meadows, bright and free,
Till at length thy rest thou findest
In the bosom of the sea!"

So calmly, likewise, flows the poet's life.—*From Little Journeys to the Homes of American Authors.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE FALL OF THE LEAF.

You know that in autumn nearly all the leaves fall from the trees. To be sure, a few trees (such as the pines and hemlocks) and some plants (such as the laurel and wintergreen and partridge vine) do hold fast to their leaves all winter; but these are so few as compared with the many plants which lose their leaves that they hardly count. Perhaps you never stopped to wonder why most plants get rid of their leaves before winter comes on; but you feel pretty sure now that there is some good reason for a habit that is adopted by nearly all the plants that live in this part of the country.

When we were talking about the way in which leaves defend themselves from different dangers, we found that evergreen leaves, the leaves that hold fast to the tree and keep fresh all winter, manage to keep their water safe inside their cells by wearing a very thick skin, and by not having too many little leaf mouths. For, when a leaf has a very thin skin and a great many mouths, its water leaks away very quickly. And, if many such leaves should remain upon a plant into the winter, might it not happen that they would let off all its water at a time when the roots could not find any more in the frozen ground? And thus might not the leaves kill the plant by draining it quite dry? So you can see why it is well for most plants to shed their leaves before winter comes on, and the root's drinking water is turned into ice.

But, when a plant is about to shed its leaves, it takes care not to waste the precious food which they hold. This food it draws back into its stem and roots, laying it away in safe places beneath the buds which are to burst another year. It is this action on the part of the plant which changes the color of the leaves every fall. That material which makes them green is broken up, and part of it is taken away. That which is left is usually yellow or brown or reddish, and gives the leaves the beautiful colors we see in the October woods.

So, whenever you see the woods changing color, losing their fresh green and turning red and yellow, you can be sure that the trees have begun to prepare for winter. You know that they are stowing away their food in warmer, safer places than can be supplied by the delicate leaves. And when all the food has been drawn out of the leaves, and packed away in the right spots, then the plant finishes a piece of work it began some time before. This piece of work is the building up of a row of little cells just where the leaf-stalk joins the stem or branch. When this row is complete, it acts almost like a knife, loosening the leaf from the stalk.

Then the leaf's life-work is over; and, with the first breeze, the empty shell, which is all that is left, breaks away from the parent plant and drifts earthward.—*Plants and their Children, Mrs. Wm. Starr Dana.*

CATERPILLARS IN WINTER.

A large number of caterpillars attain their full growth and change to chrysalis before winter, passing the cold months in torpid sleep; but besides the caterpillars of the purples, which hibernate when half grown, there are many others which hibernate at different times of caterpillar life. Most of the meadow browns, or satyrs, hatch from the egg late in the season, and hibernate before feeding upon anything more than their own egg-shells.—*Butterflies, S. H. Scudder.*

Activity is only beautiful when it is holy; that is to say, when it is spent in the service of that which passeth not away.—*Amiel's Journal.*

THE VOICE OF AUTUMN.

There comes, from yonder height,
A soft repining sound,
Where forest leaves are bright
And fall, like flakes of light,
To the ground.

It is the autumn breeze
That, lightly floating on,
Just skims the weedy leas,
Just stirs the glowing trees,
And is gone.

He moans by sedgy brook,
And visits, with a sigh,
The last pale flowers that look
From out their sunny nook
At the sky.

O'er shouting children flies
That light October wind;
And, kissing cheeks and eyes,
He leaves their merry cries
Far behind,

And wanders on to make
That soft uneasy sound
By distant wood and lake,
Where distant fountains break
From the ground.

. . . . . .

Mourn'st thou thy homeless state?
O soft, repining wind!
That early seek'st and late
The rest it is thy fate
Not to find.

Not on the mountain's breast,
Not on the ocean's shore,
In all the East and West,
The wind that stops to rest
Is no more.

By valleys, woods, and springs,
No wonder thou should'st grieve
For all the glorious things
Thou touchest with thy wings
And must leave.

— *William Cullen Bryant.*

God does not promise supplies in advance. If we have only bread for to-day, and are doing our duty faithfully, we may trust him till to-morrow for to-morrow's food. And it will surely come, for God's word fails not. As the days come, each one will bring with it its own little basket, carrying a day's supplies, but no more.— *J. R. Miller, D.D.*

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[*Please send all material for this department to Miss E. D. Chapman, 34 Buckingham Street, Cambridge, Mass.*]

Biblical Enigma.

I am composed of 27 letters.

My 21, 6, 11, 3, 15, is a high priest.

My 2, 3, 20, 16, 24, is one of the parables.

My 8, 26, 11, 1, 9, is what Pharaoh would not give the Israelites.

My 7, 13, 15, was the 4, 25, 12, 27, 10, 14, of Joshua.

My 23, 19, 22, is a road.

My 17, 24, 13, 5, 18, is what John was a witness to.

My whole is one of the Proverbs.

Charade.

As the cook was preparing a savory *first*
Well seasoned with my *last*,
He received from the mistress a *whole* to say
There'd be guests at her repast.

E. P. P.

Beheadings.

1. Behead to hunt for and leave a storm in France, behead again and leave anger, again and leave what grows with us.

2. Behead narrow and leave not able, curtail the same word and leave to look over, behead again and leave a receptacle, again and leave an article used every day.

3. Behead a bit of light and leave a cultivated piece of ground, behead again and leave one of the earliest boats known, curtail the first word and leave a part of a boat, behead and leave equal value.

Arithmetical Puzzles.

1.

My *first* is one;
My *second*, five.
My *whole* is four,
And backwards six.

2.

Add a hundred and one and a thousand together, and make a Spanish leader.

3.

Place nine ones so as to make wickedness.

Answers to Puzzles in September Number.

Charade.

Ha! vest.

Enigma.

A long vacation.

Conundrums.

1. Friendly, Society, Sandwich, and Madeira.

2. Because it does not go on after it is wound up.

3. Tenants (Ten-ants).

4. The new moon, because the full moon is lighter.

5. The manager of an opera.

The Fisherman's Puzzle.

Ray, Sole, Ling, Maid Codling, Crab, Pike, Smelt, Skate, Jack, Whiting, Perch, Flounder.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged — not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort — by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,— good citizens of the country, for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on Friday, November 2, at 10.30 A.M., at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, All interested in this work are cordially invited to be present.

Please notice that the address of the secretary has been changed from 2 *Gordon Terrace, Brookline, to* 373 *Boylston Street, Boston.*

The copy of *The Cheerful Letter* sent to Mrs. W. A. Bailey, 4 Ripley Street, Worcester, should be discontinued, as it is refused.

DIRECTIONS.

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